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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *December* the 20th, 1753.

——Quod medicorum eſt,
Promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri. HOR.

THOUGH there is nothing more pleaſing to the mind of man than variety, yet it may be purſued in ſuch a manner as to make the moſt active and varied life a tireſome ſameneſs. To illuſtrate this ſeeming paradox, I ſhall relate what I learnt from an humble companion to a gentleman of vaſt ſpirits, (as he is called by his acquaintance) who thinks he has ſhewn his value for time by never having yet enjoyed one moment of it. The active gentleman, it ſeems, propoſed to the other to make the tour of England, and ride daily from houſe to houſe, and from garden to garden; which indeed they did in ſo expeditious a manner, *not to loſe time,* that they did not allow the leaſt portion of it for the objects they ſaw to make any impreſſion on their memories. In the hotteſt weather they never walked under

under the ſhade of the plantations they ſo much admired, and came on purpoſe to ſee; but croſſed the ſcorching lawn for the neareſt way to the building they would not reſt in, or the water they refuſed to be rowed upon. Thus they FLEW through the countries and gardens they went to SEE, with as much fatigue and not more obſervation than a poſt-horſe in his ſtage; and this for the pleaſure of VARIETY, and the advantage of IMPROVEMENT.

IN what reſpect does this gentleman's conduct differ from his who ſeeks a VARIETY of ACQUAINTANCE? The conſequence muſt be exactly the ſame; viz, uſe and enjoyment of none. An unexperienced man who has happened to ſee one of this turn eagerly following or boaſting of his acquaintance with the builder, the planter, the poet, the politician, the ſeaman, the ſoldier, the muſician, the jockey, would naturally ſuppoſe he was generally talking with theſe gentlemen in the ſeveral ſciences they reſpectively excelled in. No. This is the only diſcourſe which he ſtudies to avoid.

BEFORE I endeavour to account for this ſtrange abſurdity, I would juſt obſerve, that the perſons I am ſpeaking of are of a very different character from thoſe who from a mere principle of vanity are continually numbring among their friends, though upon the ſlighteſt grounds, men of high birth and ſtation, and who always bring to my mind juſtice Shallow's acquaintance with John of Gaunt who never ſaw him but once and then he broke his head. Equally wide of the queſtion is that character, who from a love of talking avoids the company where his news has been already publiſhed, and dreads the man who is better heard than himſelf on general topics.

IGNORANCE and an IMBECILITY OF ATTENTION, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, are the moſt probable cauſes of this inconſiſtent behaviour. To avoid metaphyſical diſquiſitions, let us try if we may ſet our judgments by compariſon. Men of the weakeſt ſtomachs are ever ſolicitous of the greateſt variety of diſhes and the higheſt ſauces, which they conſtantly reject upon taſting, being as they confeſs, too ſtrong for them, though the objects of their deſire and expectation before they were brought upon the table. It is alſo ob-

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ſervable that when gentlemen after a certain age devote themſelves to the fair ſex, they generally purſue with more fervor, and always expreſs themſelves with more warmth, than when in the heat of youth, ſo long as the game is out of reach; but a nearer proſpect of ſucceſs ſoon diſcovers the difference between natural heat and the deluſion of falſe deſire and imaginary paſſion. The ſportſman cannot be more apprehenſive and concerned for the death of the hare he wiſhes to ſave, than the old gallant is at the approaching opportunity of accompliſhing his deſires, which if he obtain, I am afraid he will ſing no other *Te Deum* than that of Pyrrhus—— *Such another victory will ruin me.*

——————*Animaſque in vulnere ponunt*

was a famous quotation of doctor Bentley's on the death of an old bridegroom.

To avoid a dry argument, I have endeavoured to ſhew by ſimilitude, that there may be not only a WEAKNESS OF ATTENTION, but even an IMPOTENCE OF EAR, which I ſhall farther illuſtrate by example; and as I do not remember to have ſeen this ſubject touched upon by any writer, ancient or modern, I have endeavoured to throw it into meaſure.

YE ſages ſay, who know mankind,
Whence, to their real profit blind,
All leave thoſe fields which might produce
Fit game for paſtime or for uſe?
The well-ſtor'd warren they forſake
And love to beat the barren brake:
Sooner their pleaſures will avoid
Than run the chance of being cloy'd.

DAMOETAS ever is afraid
Leſt merchants ſhould diſcourſe on trade:
And yet of commerce will enquire,
When drinking with a country ſquire.
Of ladies he will aſk how ſoon
They think count Saxe can take a town,

Or

Or whether France or Spain will treat.
But if the brigadier he meet,
He queſtions Him about the ſum
He won or loſt at laſt night's drum.
Or if ſome miniſter of ſtate
Will deign to talk of Europe's fate,
Th' important topic he declines,
To prate of ſoups, ragouts, and wines:
Yet he, at Helluo's board, can fix
On no diſcourſe but politics.

ONCE were the linguiſt or the bard
The objects of his chief regard;
Now with expreſſive ſhrugs and looks
He flies the haunts of men of books:
Yet o'er his cups will condeſcend
To toaſt the prebend for his friend:
For depth of reading tell his merit,
Extoll his ſtyle for force and ſpirit:
Aſk where he preach'd, or what his text,
Enquire what work he'll publiſh next:
What depth of matter, how he treats it——
He can't be eaſy till he gets it.
Wet from the preſs 'tis ſent him down,
Three days before 'tis on the town:
The title read (for never more is)
Next having writ *ex don: Authoris*,
He ſpends at leaſt the time in finding
A place to ſuit it's ſize and binding,
As might have ſerv'd, if well directed,
To read the volume thus neglected.

WHEN laſt with Atticus I din'd,
Damœtas there I chanc'd to find,
Who ſtrait addreſs'd me with complaint
How Pollio talk'd of the Levant:

And

And how he teiz'd him near an hour
With the grand Signior and his pow'r:
Then Athens' ruin'd domes explain'd,
And what in Egypt ſtill remain'd.
This talk Damœtas could not bear
For Pollio had himſelf been there;
But from ſome fellow of a college
Would think the ſubjects worth his knowledge.

THE table now remov'd, again
Began Damœtas to complain;
" I knew Eugenius in his prime
" The beſt companion of his time:
" But ſince he's got to yonder board,
" You never hear him ſpeak a word,
" But tireſome ſchemes of navigation,
" The built of veſſels and their ſtation—
" Such ſtuff as ſpoils all converſation.
" Good Atticus repeat the verſes,
" You ſaid were lately made by Thyrſis".
John at that inſtant introduces
This very ſervant of the muſes;
Damœtas ſtarts, and in confuſion,
Curſing the d——d ill-tim'd intruſion;
Whiſpers the ſervant in his ear,
John, be ſo good to call a chair:
And flies the ſpot alarm'd with dread,
Leſt Thyrſis ſhould begin to read.

AND yet—for all he holds this rule,
Damœtas is in fact no fool:
For he would hardly chooſe a groom
To make his chairs or hang his room;
Nor with th' Upholſterer diſcourſe
About the Glanders in his horſe;

Nor